

Renee Elizabeth Burdick for her selection as winner of the 2004 LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This honor not only recognizes her efforts, but represents a testament to the parents, teachers, and other individuals whose personal interest, strong support, and active participation contributed to her success. To this remarkable young woman, we extend our most heartfelt good wishes for all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO TRI-COUNTY HEAD
START DIRECTOR ORION FLOWERS

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Tri-County Head Start Director Orion Flowers, who is approaching the end of a long and distinguished career of public service. A dedicated and committed individual, Orion has served the communities and children of southwest Michigan for over 30 years. Through his leadership as Director, Orion helped the program grow from serving 100 to 1026 children.

Since becoming Head Start Director in 1970, Orion devotedly and selflessly committed himself to the betterment of countless families. Orion is widely known for his extensive charity and dedication to local individuals and the community as a whole. He spent a career devoted to improving the lives of the citizens of southwest Michigan, and the area is forever in his debt. There is no question that Orion's dedication and contributions to the Tri-County will be missed.

One example of Orion's diligent work occurred in the early 1970's, when he initiated a program whereby children would come to a Mobile Unit for classes. In conjunction with that, a Home Based program began where a Home Visitor would go into a family's home to assist parents in teaching their children an array of subjects and concerns. Remarkably the Mobile Unit and Home Based concepts are still in use today.

Many words come to mind as one reflects upon Orion Flower's public service to our community. He is selfless, generous, giving, caring, humble . . . the list goes on. Our community is in debt to Orion Flowers for his continued public service since 1970. I wish him and his family all the best in retirement. Orion's contributions to our community have been many, and we are all better off because of his service. He will be truly missed by the folks in southwest Michigan.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISH-
MENTS OF MR. J.J. AMARO

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. J.J. Amaro, a great friend who has distinguished himself as a civil and community leader. As a member of the San Antonio Water System Board of Trustees since 1994, Mr. Amaro has provided our local

water supply company and the San Antonio community with outstanding service and dedication. He has been the voice of many who for too many years had no voice.

During Mr. Amaro's decade of tenure, the San Antonio Water System has enjoyed an unparalleled period of innovation and has become a model for water systems across the country while maintaining low water rates for consumers. Mr. Amaro and the board created a 50-year master plan that was approved in 1998 to provide for San Antonio's steeply growing population. Importantly, he has worked with the board to bring water resources to people and neighborhoods long overlooked in our city's history.

By implementing new technologies, the San Antonio Water System has developed premier water recycling programs as well as an aquifer storage and recovery system to protect this precious resource. In addition, he has helped SAWS protect the Edwards Aquifer—the principal source of our drinking water—by implementing regulations and purchasing 9,000 acres within the recharge zone. In recognition of these improvements, this utility has earned numerous awards for environmental excellence, quality engineering designs, and public education programs.

While the San Antonio Water System has benefited immensely from Mr. Amaro's expertise, other organizations have also been fortunate to have his generous assistance. Mr. Amaro serves as a board member for the St. Peter/St. Joseph Children's Home and the United Negro College Fund.

On May 12, 2004, colleagues, friends and family will gather together to recognize J.J. Amaro's leadership and numerous hours of community service on behalf of the people of San Antonio. It is a pleasure to recognize and thank Mr. Amaro for his many contributions and public service. I ask the Members of the House of Representatives to join me in honoring this gentleman on his retirement from the San Antonio Water System Board of Trustees and wish Mr. J.J. Amaro and his family all the best on this special day.

HONORING BRUNO BETTEGA FOR
HIS 50 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER
FIREFIGHTER SERVICE.

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who's selfless and tireless dedication has been a tremendous service to the community where he lives.

Bruno Bettega has dedicated fifty years of his life as a volunteer firefighter for the Northvale Volunteer Fire Department in Northvale, NJ. Even more amazingly, at age 92, Bruno still plays an active role in the department and is their oldest active member.

During Mr. Bettega's half-century of service he has participated in numerous supportive roles. Bruno is also a member of the Northvale Fire Department Exempt Fireman's Association.

Volunteer fire departments perform a sometimes thankless, but absolutely imperative service to the communities they protect. The

lives of our family and friends are in their hands and they do a truly commendable job keeping each and everyone of us safe.

Bruno Bettega should be regarded as nothing less than a hero to his community. I urge all my colleagues to join with me in celebrating his achievements and thanking him for all that he has done.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG
REIMPORTATION IS UNAVOIDABLE

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to submit, for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, an editorial from the Omaha World-Herald edition of May 6, 2004, which recognizes that prescription drug reimportation is inevitable. Clearly, American consumers should not be forced to pay the world's highest prices for the medicines they need. We must open the drug markets so Americans can obtain the prescription drugs they need when they need them most and at affordable prices. This Member commends this editorial to his colleagues.

“YES” TO DRUGS FROM CANADA

The Bush administration has adamantly resisted allowing Americans to legally import substantially cheaper prescription drugs from foreign countries. Therefore, a top official's apparent capitulation on Tuesday was a surprise.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, long a chief player in barring entrance to lower-cost medicines from Canada and elsewhere, said Tuesday that legalizing imports was inevitable. Congress will almost certainly pass legislation this year, he said. What's more, he will advise President Bush to sign it.

“Inevitable” is a good word; a recent Associated Press poll showed that two-thirds of the people surveyed wanted the government to make it easier to get cheaper drugs from foreign countries. Many already do: An estimated 2 million American senior citizens have illegally purchased U.S.-made drugs from Canadian pharmacies.

In Canada, drugs can cost less than half what they do in this country. This is because drug manufacturers load all research and similar costs onto U.S. buyers. Other governments, by contrast, regulate drug prices.

Thompson, backed by President Bush, most congressional Republicans and the pharmaceutical industry, has staunchly resisted importation. He has maintained that the safety of drugs that have been out of American hands can't be assured.

In accepting reality, though, Thompson bristled with caution. Legalizing foreign imports will be expensive, Thompson said—his department will have to increase inspections of foreign pharmaceutical plants and of the drugs as they enter this country, negating some of the savings consumers might expect.

Then, too, the Congressional Budget Office predicted minimal savings for consumers. The limited availability of drugs for import, added insurance costs and similar economic factors would mean savings of only about \$40 billion over 10 years, or 1 percent, the federal agency suggested.

In addition, several drug companies have already acted to shut down supplies to Canadian pharmacies that resell to U.S. customers. That kind of marketing tactic could